

that list. We were told we would be notified when the decision was made so we would have an opportunity to discuss that issue with our side of the aisle and were given no such opportunity.

I feel we are perfectly within our rights to object because of the way this has been handled.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. Surely.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. The gentleman is free to object, but the fact is that the identical list of proposed conferees that was given his staff yesterday has been agreed to.

The Speaker under 40 years of Democratic rule of the House of Representatives had taken it unto himself to have sole prerogative over who the conferees are. That has not changed. I am at a loss to understand how the gentleman has been put out of sorts by the agreement on a list that his staff had yesterday.

I am reminded, to go one step further, that the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] once called a conference, adjourned the House, went back to the Cloakroom, confected the conference, reported out the reports of the conference all within the space of 2 minutes, and the minority was given no opportunity to object. The gentleman has had ample opportunity to give input.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY] has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. OBEY was allowed to proceed for 1 additional minute.)

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I would simply note that with all due respect to what may happen on other committees, on our committee there has always been a tradition of due notice and due consultation before any such appointments have been made.

I would also ask the gentleman if he can tell me any time in the past during which the Speaker has threatened to reduce the number of Democratic conferees on an appropriations conference below that of the ratio on the committee.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. The gentleman well knows that this entire conference centers around a national security problem. The gentleman knows that because of the deployment of troops around the world in many forgotten spots of this wide globe of ours that the readiness, maintenance, operations, training hours, and many other importance areas have been depleted within the Pentagon, and we have had to come forward and try to replace those monies so that the Pentagon, the Defense Department of this country, can carry out its mission without running short of money.

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Now, it has been the point of view of the gentleman from Louisiana and the gentleman from Florida, the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee—

Mr. OBEY. Reclaiming my time for just one second to correct something the gentleman said, the fact is the guts of this conference is not solely the provision of the authority that the gentleman is talking about. It is also the intent of the majority party to take domestic accounts to pay for Pentagon bills in a bill which is not even fully paid for and which adds to the deficit.

Until we can get an understanding about not adding to the deficit, I am going to object.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SENBRENNER). The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. It is my understanding, or am I correct in understanding that if the gentleman's objection is heard and we cannot go to conference using the very same names of the conferees that were submitted to his staff yesterday, that we are going to be forced to roll over until Tuesday and not appoint conferees until Tuesday, and that the critical interests of the Defense Department will not be met because the conference will not be had until later than that?

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, that is not a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin is correct.

Mr. OBEY. You can go to conference on Tuesday at the same time as you could under your motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin is correct. This is not a proper parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, to rephrase my parliamentary inquiry, the gentleman from Louisiana is under the impression that with the gentleman's objection, we cannot go to conference. Is that correct?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is correct.

Mr. LIVINGSTON. All right. Then further parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker, when might we be able to go to conference on this critical defense issue?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Louisiana knows that there are two ways by which a bill can be committed to conference. One is by unanimous consent, and second is by a motion made pursuant to rule XX of the Rules of the House, or by a rule from the Committee on Rules. That is a third way.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. OBEY. Is it not true that the gentleman can easily find himself in conference on Tuesday just as he would have found himself in conference on Tuesday if he makes this motion Tuesday using the right rule?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is not a parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. OBEY. It may not be, but it is a fact.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. GEPHARDT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I ask for this time to inquire of the distinguished majority leader about the schedule for the following week.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY].

Mr. ARMEY. I thank the gentleman from Missouri for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the House will not be in session on Monday, March 27.

On Tuesday, March 28, the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business to consider five bills under suspension of the rules:

H.R. 849, the Age Discrimination Employment Act Amendments of 1995;

H.R. 529, the Targhee National Forest Land Exchange;

H.R. 606, the Dayton Aviation Heritage Preservation Act Amendments;

H.R. 622, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Convention Act of 1995; and

H.R. 256, the Fort Carson and Pinyon Canyon Land Withdrawal.

If any recorded votes are ordered, they will not take place before 5 p.m. on Tuesday. After we complete action on the five suspensions, we will take up the rule for House Joint Resolution 73, the term limits constitutional amendment.

For Wednesday, March 29, and the balance of the week, the House will complete consideration of House Joint Resolution 73.

Meeting times for the House are 11 a.m. on Wednesday and 10 a.m. on Thursday.

The House will not be in session on Friday, March 31.

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, first, it is probably clear, but maybe we need to make it clear, I take it there are no more votes today?

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman will yield, that is correct.

Mr. GEPHARDT. I thank the gentleman.

Second, I would like to ask regarding the days off next week, can the gentleman advise whether or not he expects votes on Thursday? I assume that he will be meeting on Thursday on some of these matters.

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman will yield, yes, that is correct. We do expect